

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PARIS 06038

NESCO

FOR IO AND USNATCOMM

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UNESCO, AORG
SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF US NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR UNESCO VISIT TO THE U.K. NATIONAL
COMMISSION FOR UNESCO MEETING OF ITS
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

SUMMARY: THE UK COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS OF THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO MET ON FEB. 16 TO HEAR
MR. DE LEON, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMISSION FOR THE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS
(ICSP). THE MEETING WAS CONTROVERSIAL AND HEATED,
SINCE THE UK COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE WAS GENERALLY
DISPLEASED BY THE VAGUENESS AND SLOWNESS OF THE ICSP.

1. ON FEBRUARY 16, THE UK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
UNESCO MET AT ITS HEADQUARTERS WITH ITS COMMUNICATIONS
COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE UK'S PROJECTED POSITION WITH
RESPECT TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE STUDY
OF COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS (ICSP), AND TO HEAR MR. DE
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LEON, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE ICSP. PRESENT AT THE
MEETING WERE: CHAIRMAN OF THE UK COMMUNICATION
COMMISSION, DR. TOM MARGERISON; DENIS CARR, UK PERMA-
NENT DELEGATE TO UNESCO; LEN MARTIN, CHAIRMAN OF THE
UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD; DAVID CHURCH, EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY TO THE UK NATIONAL COMMISSION, AND FOUR
ADDITIONAL MEMBERS OF THE UK COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

AND SECRETARIAT STAFF.

2. DE LEON BRIEFLY EXPLAINED THE ORIGIN OF THE ICSP. IN ADDITION, HE STATED THE PRESENT TIMETABLE FOR THE ICSP AS FOLLOWS: (A) STOCKHOLM MEETINGS IN APRIL; (B) INTERIM REPORT TO BE DISCUSSED IN EITHER JUNE OR EARLY JULY; (C) SUBMISSION OF INTERIM REPORT TO THE 1978 GENERAL CONFERENCE; (D) LATE DECEMBER 1978 OR JANUARY 1979, A MEETING TO SUMMARIZE THE DEBATE IN THE INTERIM REPORT; (3) 1979 COMMENTS FROM MEMBER STATES; (F) GENERAL CONFERENCE SUBMISSION OF FINAL REPORT.

3. DE LEON EXPLAINED THAT THERE WERE THREE WAYS TO EXPAND SCOPE OF THE ICSP FROM ITS PRESENT SMALL COMPOSITION: (A) TO CREATE AN OUTER CIRCLE OF EXPERTS FROM OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES WHO WILL BE INVITED TO PRESENT PAPERS, DOCUMENTS, STUDIES, ETC., IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION; (B) THE CONVENING OF SMALL INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS ON THE SUBJECT MATTER, E.G. STOCKHOLM MEETING ON NEWS AGENCIES; (C) NATIONAL COMMISSIONS' INVOLVEMENT.

4. DE LEON SAID THAT THERE WERE TWO ALTERNATIVES TO OFFER THE MEMBER STATES BEFORE THE FORTHCOMING EXBD MEETING WITH RESPECT TO THE ISSUE OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS: (A) PRESENT AN INTERIM REPORT WHICH WOULD HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

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A VERY LIMITED SCOPE AND PURPOSIVELY VAGUE, OR (B) AN INTERIM REPORT WHICH WOULD RAISE THE MOST DIFFICULT POINTS TO BE DISCUSSED THROUGH 1978 AND 1979 AND IDENTIFY THE MAIN TOPICS OF CONCERN AT THIS EARLY STAGE. (HE PREFERRED THE LATTER.)

5. IN HIS SUMMARY, DE LEON STATED THAT THE ICSP'S MANDATE WAS TO INVESTIGATE AND REPORT ON THE PROBLEM OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS AND NOT ON INFORMATION. (THIS DISTINCTION WAS NOT EXPLAINED.) THE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES THAT THE ICSP WILL ENCOUNTER, HE SAID, ARE TWO: (A) THE SERIOUS LACK OF AVAILABLE RESEARCH IN THIS AREA OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS AND (B) THE IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEMBER STATES ON THE SUBJECT MATTER. THE ICSP, THEREFORE, WILL HAVE TO RELY ON THE EXISTING RESEARCH, SINCE NO NEW SERIOUS RESEARCH CAN BE DONE

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UNDER THE EXISTING TIMETABLE, AND IT WILL HAVE TO BEAR
AND STRUGGLE WITH THE EXISTING IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES.

6. WITH RESPECT TO THE FORTHCOMING ICSP STOCKHOLM
MEETING: 24 NEWS AGENCIES WILL BE INVITED, 12 TO 15
CUSTOMERS OF NEWS AGENCIES, AND 20 OUTSIDE OBSERVERS.
THE MAIN NEWS AGENCIES TO BE INVITED ARE UP, AP,
REUTERS, AFP, NEW CHINA AND TASS. THE REGIONAL BODIES
WILL SELECT THE REST OF THE NEWS AGENCIES IN ORDER TO
REACH 24. FIVE UNESCO BACKGROUND PAPERS OR MONOGRAMS
ON NEWS AGENCIES AND GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE PRE-
PARED FOR THE ICSP, E.G. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SWEDEN AND AFRICA AND HOW THE SWEDISH MEDIA VIEWS AND
PRESENTS AFRICAN NEWS.

7. ROLE OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS. DE LEON URGED ALL
NATIONAL COMMISSIONS TO GET INVOLVED IN THE WORKINGS OF
THE ICSP. HE STATED THREE WAYS FOR COMMISSIONS TO
PARTICIPATE AND CONTRIBUTE: (A) FOR EACH COMMISSION TO
SUBMIT A LIST OF LEADING SPECIALISTS ON GLOBAL COMMUNI-
CATIONS WHO COULD BE HELPFUL IN PREPARING
PAPERS, MONOGRAMS ETC., TO THE ICSP; (B) TO SUBMIT TO
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THE ICSP RESEARCH FINDINGS ALREADY DONE IN EACH COUNTRY
ON THE SUBJECT MATTER; (C) EACH COMMISSION TO ORGANIZE
SMALL SEMINARS OR CONSULTATIONS ON THE SUBJECT MATTER
IN EACH COUNTRY IN ORDER TO SUBMIT ITS FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ICSP.

8. AFTER DE LEON'S BRIEFING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE UK COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE, DR. TOM MARGERISON, PROCEEDED TO PRESENT HIS VIEWS ON THE ICSP. (DR. MARGERISON IS A WELL RESPECTED, WELL CONNECTED JOURNALIST, BUSINESSMAN, TELEVISION BROADCASTER, AND PRODUCER, PRESENTLY UNEMPLOYED.) DR. MARGERISON IMMEDIATE PROCEEDED TO CRITICIZE THE COMPOSITION OF THE ICSP IN THE BEST BRITISH TRADITION OF INTELLIGENCE, WIT, ACERBIC TONE AND ELEGANCE. HE CRITICIZED THE FAILURE OF M'BOW TO NAME ANY WOMEN TO THE ICSP, NO PRSON WHO WAS AN EXPERT ON TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATIONS AND THE LACK OF PHILOSOPHERS IN THE SUBJECT MATTER. THERE ARE, HE SAID, "TOO MANY POLITICIANS." DE LEON TRIED TO DEFEND THE COMPOSITION OF THE ICSP, AGREEING TO THE LACK OF WOMEN, PHILOSOPHERS AND TECHNICAL EXPERTS, BUT REFUSED TO ACCEPT THAT THE ICSP WAS FILLED BY A MAJORITY OF POLITICIANS. (DR. MAGERISON WAS REFERRING TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE USSR, THE NETHERLANDS, TUNISIA, NIGERIA, CHILE, AND YUGOSLOVIA.)

9. THE MEETING FROM THEN ON BOILED DOWN TO: (A) A PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATE AS TO WHAT DOES GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS REALLY MEAN; (B) WHAT IS THE PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION; (C) THE LACK OF FOCUS ON DEFINITION AS TO EXACTLY WHAT IS THE MANDATE OF THE ICSP; (D) THE CONFIDENTIAL

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LIMITED DURATION OF THE PRESENT TIMETABLE ESTABLISHED BY THE ICSP, CONSIDERING THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SUBJECT MATTER. IT WAS IN GENERAL A FAIRLY VEHEMENT ATTACK ON DE LEON'S BRIEFING AND THE VAGUENESS OF THE ICSP MANDATE. DE LEON TRIED TO DEFEND HIMSELF AS WELL AS HE COULD, WITH NO APPARENT SUCCESS. THE UK COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE, AS OF THIS MOMENT, SEE NO CONCRETE VALUE TO THE ICSP UNLESS IT SPECIFICALLY

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NARROWS ITS FIELD OF INVESTIGATION.

10. BOTH CHURCH AND GUERRA-MONDRAGON, RESPECTIVE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF THE UK AND US NATIONAL COMMISSIONS AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR EITHER COMMISSION TO SUBMIT A LIST OF COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTS FROM EACH COUNTRY UNTIL THERE WAS A CLEAR MANDATE OR SPECIFICITY AS TO THE ROLE OF THE ICSP. EACH AGREED THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO CLARIFY THE EXACT NATURE OF AGENDA TO THE FORTHCOMING STOCKHOLM MEETING. ONCE THE AGENDA WAS SUBMITTED TO BOTH COMMISSIONS, THE COMMISSIONS THEMSELVES WOULD THEN BE IN THE MOST POSITIVE DISPOSITION TO ASSIST THE ICSP. DE LEON PROMISED TO SEND THE AGENDA FOR THE STOCKHOLM MEETING BY FEB. 24.

11. WITH RESPECT TO THE DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE MEDIA, THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE HAS NOT YET DEVELOPED A FINAL POSITION FOR THE UK COMMISSION. HOWEVER, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE SAID IN THE MORNING SESSION THAT HE FOUND "THE DRAFT A USELESS AND UNOBJECTIONABLE DOCUMENT". HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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CHURCH DID MENTION TO GUERRA-MONDRAGON THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD SOME QUESTIONS AS TO THE LAST REVISED DRAFT, AND THE UK, THEREFORE, HAS NOT YET ESTABLISHED A POSITION ON THE DRAFT.
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